

Introduction

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The three articles in this issue of *The Asian Review* examine how Asia's mythical and historical past inform its political and socio-cultural present.

Natawan WONGCHALARD focuses on a retelling of the great Asian epic "The Ramayana." Her article uses *Asura: Tale of the Vanquished* by Anand Neelakantan as an object of analysis to demonstrate how a form of retelling called oppositional telling can provide alternative voices to the original story. Adopting a framework of subaltern studies, she demonstrates the way in which Neelakantan demystifies both Rama's virtues and Ravana's evilness.

Similarly, Pulind SAMANT also attempts to establish a method in which scholars of political sciences and international relations can adopt the lens of longstanding Indic and Sinic civilization clashes in Southeast Asia to examine the present-day geopolitical rivalry between India and China. His article focuses on the current socio-political agitation in Thailand in order to demonstrate how the situation can be interpreted along this line and why it has posed great concern to India. Although its content is debatable, we decided to include it in order to lay the foundation for further discussions.

Lastly, Alexandre BARTHEL brings us back to the days of the Cold War. His article focuses on the history of armed conflicts between the Royal Thai Armed Force and the Thai Communist Party in the Northeastern region of Thailand between 1960 to 1965. It

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provides a rare account of the source of the conflict, how it unfolded and the involvement of Thai exiles in Laos.